Assembling a Balancing Bee

Lesson Description: Students will produce balancing bees using both the artisan and assembly line method.

Standards:

* Arkansas Social Studies
* Common Core

Objectives:

* Students will experience the artisan and assembly line method of production.
* Students will develop their human capital and be able to explain how “training their brain” will help them in school.

Materials required:

Procedure:

1. Divide the class into groups of 5 or 6. Have the students clear everything from their desk.
2. We are going to learn about 2 different ways to produce products. One is the assembly line method. On an assembly line, workers each produce a small part of the product. For example, in a car factory each person has a specific job that they do as the car or truck moves down the conveyer belt. One person might spend their day putting on doors, while another might only put in head lights. The second way to produce products is called the artisan or craftsman method. Producers who use this method produce the entire product themselves. For example, a painter would paint an entire picture, not just one small part.
3. Today the class is going to produce Balancing Bees. Some groups will be artisans and complete the entire bee by themselves. Other groups will work on an assembly line to produce the bees. No matter which group you are in the cards must be produced in a certain way. Display completed Balancing Bee.
4. Designate groups as either artisan production or assembly line production. Ask: What kind of jobs would you need in an assembly line to produce these bees? Who will do these jobs? *(Each person will do one job over and over again.)* Who will do the jobs at the artisan tables? *(Each person will do all of the jobs)*
5. Distribute the materials for the activity. Tell the students that due to government safety regulation they can only use the materials provided by you. Remind them that at the artisans must make the entire bee by themselves and that assembly line workers will each do one job over and over again.
6. Tell: The assembly line groups are to make as many bees as possible. Any that do not meet these standards will be discarded. At the artisan tables each person is to work to create one perfect bee. Ask one artisan group: How many bees should you have? *(one per person in group)* Ask one assembly line group: How many bees should you have? *(as many as possible).*
7. Give the students 5 minutes to produce bees. Move from group to group to insure that directions are being followed and to help with any misunderstandings. Ask the assembly line groups who is doing what job.
8. When time is up, have each group share the number of bees they completed. Be sure to discard any that don’t meet the standards. Be sure to compliment the groups on their balancing bee production abilities.
9. Ask the class:
   1. Do you think it will be easier or harder to produce the Balancing Bees during the next round? *(easier)*
   2. Why?(because we know what we’re doing)
   3. When you learn a something new that is called improving your human capital.
10. Ask if there are any questions. Collect all finished bees and discard any used paper and incomplete bees. Remind the groups that they use the same production method as before and their goals. Assembly line as many as possible, artisan one each. Replenish supplies as needed. Start Round Two of production.
11. Repeat steps 7 and 8.
12. Ask each group if they produced more cards than in round one. *(Hopefully, most or all of the groups did.)* Ask, what made the second round easier? *(the students knew what to do)* What do we call it when we train our brain? *(improving human capital).*

Closure:

1. If you needed to produce 1000 products that are all the same which method would be the best to use, artisan or assembly line? *(assembly line)*
2. If you wanted to produce 10 really special products which method would be the best to use, artisan or assembly line? *(artisan)*
3. When we are improving our human capital what are we doing? *(training your brain)*